SOME INTERESTING NEWS OF REEL PLAYS AND REAL PLAYERS

ANN ORR, who has made a distinctive impression as the athletic girl in "Leave It to Jane," at the Longacre Theatre, has been in receipt of a number of verses from amateur poets the last few weeks. "I don't know just why the muse has picked on me this season," says Miss Orr. "I've always thought that dainty ingenue types or domestic females, or exotic and delicate ladies with big, soulful eyes were more prone to inspire verse than healthy, sunburned, outdoor maidens of the athletic type such as I portray in *Jane*. Nevertheless the poems keep coming. Here is one I received the other day":

There's a charming young lady
Who dances with ease,
Whose presence refreshes
Just like a cool breeze;
She's really quite winsome,
Quite pretty; what's more
She's greatly amusing,
Is Miss Anna Orr.

She's lovely while singing
In her own cute way.
For the squeak in her voice
I can't find words to say;
But believe me, she's worth while,
This Anna Orr by name.
So, if you need convincing,
See "Leave It to Jane."

Those who have seen "Chu Chin Chow" at the Manhattan Opera House have been much interested in the personality of the young man who sings the tenor role of *Nur Al Huda-Ah*. His name is George Rasely and this is the first time he has ever been upon the professional stage. Experienced theatrical men who saw the performance the first night marvelled at the perfect composure and self-confidence of this young man, who is only 22 years of age and whose clear, beautiful tenor voice was one of the notable features of this very unusual production.

Perhaps one reason why Mr. Rasely is so self-confident in the use of his voice is that he has been singing for the past two years in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, commonly known as the Rockefeller church, because of the fact that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., teaches a Bible class there. Mr. Rasely in fact still sings there every Sunday, although he sings eight times a week at the Manhattan Opera House in "Chu Chin Chow." He is a native of Worcester, Mass., and his father is a retired clergyman. He studied music at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston and achieved such a success there that two years ago he received an offer to come to New York to sing in the Rockefeller church. He has also been heard quite a number of times in concert.

In casting "Chu Chin Chow" Mr. Gest experienced the greatest difficulty in securing a young man with a tenor voice who had the youthful appearance necessary for the role of *Nur Al Huda-Ah*. Through a music agent Mr. Rasely was sent to him. The day Mr. Rasely called at the Manhattan Opera House he went upon the stage of the great auditorium when it was absolutely empty and without any accompanist he sang several selections from grand opera. Mr. Gest was so pleased with his voice that he has placed the young man under contract for three years. It was anticipated that there would be some difficulty in teaching Mr. Rasely how to act, as he had never spoken a line in a dramatic performance, but E. Lyall Swete, the stage director who produced "Chu Chin Chow," soon put Mr. Rasely quite at his ease. When he made his first appearance the opening night of "Chu Chin Chow" he had all the self-possession and poise of an experienced opera singer, and few knew that he was actually making his professional debut on the operatic stage.

Arline Chase in "Leave it to Jane"

WEATHER TO ORDER.

The Goldwyn Company Had to Make Its Own.

Goldwyn's technical staff is quite used to building apartment houses, palaces and country inns to order, but recently, just because New Jersey's climate can't be depended on for bad weather to order, it broke its record by building a torrential thunderstorm.

Classicists might more properly say that the Goldwyn staff made a handy studio edition of the famous old storm bag of Æolus and then let out the winds and weathers called for in Madge Kennedy's new film play, "Nearly Married," at the Strand to-day.

At any rate, any visitor to the Goldwyn lot might have found the following:

Item, one country inn, practicable on three sides, with three entrances and twelve are lights in the interior.

Item, one street, with lamp posts.

Item, one barn.

Item, one tree trimmed into a telegraph pole at the top to support eleven rain pipes running over to the inn, four more above the barn, seven are lights in among the first rain pipes, four more by the barn.

Item, one wind machine made out of an aeroplane motor, with eight arc lights and four Cooper Hewitts assisting.

And if the visitor had arrived in the dead of night he might have found Miss Kennedy, Director Chester Withey and a mud bespattered crowd of actors navigating the worst artificial weather ever made out of hose pipes and electric current. The water from a nearby hydrant coursed through fifteen pipes overhead, flowed out through tiny holes in sheets of rain, which, caught ever and again in lightning flashes from the eighteen arc lights, were flung in stinging blasts against the wayfarers and the inn by the huge aeroplane propeller.

THEY ALL KNOW MADGE.

Even on the Streets Miss Kennedy Is Spotted.

The day after Douglas Fairbanks registered his remarkable hit in "The Lamb" two years ago not an alert patron of the films passed him by without a look of recognition. The Fairbanks of the screen—smile, shoulders and walk—is the Fairbanks of the flesh, and hundreds of pedestrians every day "spot" the actor as he walks the streets. Perhaps he likes it. Perhaps he doesn't. But it's an unescapable fact.

Not so, however, with a certain young actress of comedy parts who may safely be counted as the only player to duplicate the instant success with both critics and public that went to Fairbanks. Madge Kennedy doubtless rejoiced in the reviews and the applause which followed the first showing of "Baby Mine," but any one who knows the Goldwyn star knows, too, that she must rejoice far more that a certain accident makes it practically impossible for her to be recognized in everyday life by persons who have seen her only on the screen. And so she goes comfortably along the path of her daily routine—whether it leads her to the studio in New Jersey or down Fifth avenue—with the same sublime confidence in her incognita that she enjoyed before "Baby Mine" flashed into popularity. And the advent of "Nearly Married," her newest film, at the Strand to-day will make as little difference.

The secret lies in the color of her hair and eyes and the accident is purely photographic. Look at Madge Kennedy on the screen and you find a sloe eyed beauty with the blackest of hair. See her out shopping and you find eyes of the richest brown and hair of auburn. Photographically and physically she is a brunette; but—there are brunettes and brunettes; and here is one that the camera gives a disguise which Sherlock Holmes himself might envy.

DONALD BRIAN *and* HIS DANCING PARTNERS CISSIE SEWELL *and* EDYTHE MASON AT THE BROADHURST "HER REGIMENT"

THE PERFECT FATHER.

Mr. Carleton Is in Turn Son of a Well Known Parent.

William P. Carleton, who increases the joy of living by his splendid performance of the husky chauffeur—the 100 per cent. physically perfect specimen of manhood who is picked to be the father of a eugenic child—in "The Very Idea" is equally at home in either musical comedy or the straight drama, but if Carleton has his choice hereafter he will stick to the legitimate end of the stage game. The musical comedy stage has always drawn the Carletons, for the husky William's dad is one of the liveliest old timers on the musical comedy stage to-day.

Young Bill—this merely to distinguish him from his more celebrated father—was practically raised in the atmosphere of musical comedy, and when the time came for him to display his hereditary instinct for the stage he naturally started in that line of work and kept at it for years. The older Carleton can stick to musical comedy if he sees fit, but the younger is going to give it the goodby for good and all if he has his way about it.

"Musical comedy work is hard," said Young Bill, "much harder than any one who is not in the business realizes. There is no harder work for the actor except the two a day game of vaudeville. And why work hard if you can get just as much money in an easier job? Why, if you have any sort of a role in a musical comedy you are very apt to be kept busy between scenes changing your clothes. You are kept on the jump all the time in musical plays and you must nurse your voice along as if it was a weak child.

"Knowing that you don't have to sing and dance is a wonderful relief after you have spent a good many years in musical comedy. That is the chief reason that appearing in a straight role in a play appeals to me. You have certain lines to speak and one or two changes of dress to make. When you are finished you are probably through until the next performance. In musical plays some one—the authors or the management—is always injecting new songs or new numbers. That means more work for the players. Constant rehearsing is the rule, whereas in a comedy, farce or drama, once the play is set and successful there are few changes, particularly in New York. That is the reason I would rather work in a straight play than in a musical comedy."

WOULD HE HAVE DONE IT?

That Is, Would Donald Brian Have Fought With Jess Willard, What?

While it is a fact that almost everybody recognizes Donald Brian's varied accomplishments, it would be safe to wager that you never heard how near the popular star of "Her Regiment" came to fighting with Jess Willard, the heavyweight fighting champion. It all happened in the town of Peoria, Ill., at the time the young musical comedy favorite was to play there and when the heavyweight fighter was also there, travelling with a circus.

Arriving in Peoria, Mr. Brian engaged quarters at the leading hotel. In recalling his experience he says: "The first night I was there, while studying a new verse that had been added to one of the songs, I noticed that the noise in the hotel was something terrible. I might add that my room was on the eighth floor. I made up my mind, however, that it was the first night and it surely would not occur on the second. The second night the noise from the next room reminded me of bedlam let loose. I attempted to sleep. Then attempted to read. All without avail. I made up my mind that if it occurred the next night I would make a row. It was almost 2 o'clock in the morning of that night before I retired. Then I prepared to sleep, all the while congratulating myself that the noise was over for the time being.

"It was less than five minutes, however, before the disturbance began afresh. I stood it as long as I could, then I leaped out of the bed. In a moment I was in my dressing gown and rapping on the door of the next room. A big athletic looking chap came to the door. 'Who are you?' he gruffly exclaimed. "That is no concern of yours,' I answered sharply. 'I'm in the next room; for several nights you and your friends have kept me awake. Now if you do not put an end to this somebody is going to get a jolly good thrashing.' 'Do you mean me?' said the big fellow with the gruff voice. 'Yes, I mean you or any one else who attempts to disturb me,' was my reply.

"The big fellow looked at me closely for a moment; then he closed the door with a bang. I retired to my room and enjoyed a good night's rest. There was no more noise. In the morning as I was leaving I had a brief talk with the clerk."

"'Who was it that disturbed my rest for the last couple of nights?' I inquired. The clerk began to laugh. He evidently had been told of my threat to thrash the disturbers. 'You did more than the ordinary man would do, Mr. Brian, and more than I would do were I in your place.'

"'Why, what do you mean?' I asked him. "Well, the big fellow you threatened to thrash was Jess Willard.' I quickly disappeared from the vicinity of the desk, paid my bill and was off to the station in a jiffy. Many is the time that I have thanked the good stars that Mr. Willard did not take me at my word. Perhaps if he had I would not be here now to tell the tale."

PEGGY WOOD AND CHARLES PURCELL IN "MAYTIME"

LEOPOLD AUER'S VIOLIN PUPILS SUCCESSFULLY INVADING AMERICA

By FREDERICK N. SARD.

VIOLIN virtuosi are born—only to be made; technical mastery has its source not in some remote heaven but in the busy workshop littered with millions of false notes and drab in the smudge of drudgery. There was but one Son of the Heavens, and his name was Nicolo Paganini.

The Leopold Auer workshop has turned out a series of youthful artists who have maintained their rank and fulfilled their promise. Himself a virtuoso and a composer of ability, he has reached the fulness of his powers as teacher and guide, bringing to his pedagogical methods the fruits of his accomplishment as artist. Perhaps in this unique combination of powers lies the secret of his success.

He shapes talent with a master hand, following the lines and lineaments of the natural endowments of his pupils, training them to express freely their individuality, controlled only on the plane of discipline and knowledge. In rapid succession there have emerged from his studio Mischa Elman, Efrem Zimbalist, Kathleen Parlow, Eddy Brown, Jascha Heifetz, Toscha Seidel and Max Rosen.

Note the preponderance of Russian Jews in this gallery, and if you have a bent for sociological formula here is a golden chance to mix a theory compounded of Slavic passion, Jewish tenacity, weit-schmerz, the exotic nature of the violin, &c.

Violin technic is difficult to define but easy to recognize. The purely physical factors are more significant in the playing of the violin than in the case of any other instrument; but they must be coordinated with musical intelligence and mentality—a platitude worth repeating to evade futile speculation.

Both phases are interrelated, and the so-called psychic factors are dimly understood, not because they transcend physical law but because we do not as yet fully understand the mechanism of all mental activity. Hence much vapid speculation is wasted on describing the temperament of artists. In a past generation Paganini was credited with a devil who produced the magical harmonics; to-day the violin virtuosi are supposed to have spiritual auras of more or less delicate nuances. The superstition is the same.

As a matter of plain prose a master of the violin embodies in his playing the sum total of perfectly recognizable and definite attributes of mind and character, and the area of his genius is bounded by natural limitations. One runs to the introspective type; a second to the dramatic, or more accurately, the bravura; a third to the sentimental.

A neat test for comparing these temperaments is provided by the "Chaconne" of Bach, perhaps the greatest of all compositions for the violin. A Zimbalist discovers for us mysterious backgrounds and dim perspectives; an Elman reveals the outline and the amplitude of a cathedral; a Kreisler the characters of meditation.

Leopold Auer's method is to permit each temperament to have free play.

"I visited him in the summer of 1913," writes Victor Kuzdo. "His villa commands an enchanting outlook over the river and distant hills. The music room or studio of the villa has a quiet elegance about it. A few chairs and rugs, some pictures, a piano, a violin stand and a table with a priceless Stradivarius resting upon it constitute the furnishings.

"You enter. The professor greets you with a kindly smile and a cordial handshake, and is ready for you. You tune your violin, resin your bow and start. Auer takes his seat at the piano and plays your accompaniment, looking neither at the score nor at the keyboard. He looks at you instead, watching and listening. He does not interrupt you. When you are through he makes a few comments.

"You start again—but this time he stops you. Jumping up from the piano and snatching his Strad he shows you on his violin what he wants. You try and try and know just exactly how to work it out for the next lesson.

"He teaches only a limited number of pupils and gives four and five lessons on alternate days, reserving one day of the week for rest and recreation. * * * Auer will teach you tone, technic, bowing and interpretation all at the same time. His suggestions and explanations are like his bowing and fingering—the simplest in the world and the most effective. * * * Among the virtuoso composers Ernst is his favorite."

His latest pupil heard in this city is Jascha Heifetz. For months before the young man's arrival knowing tomtoms beat in the camps of the violinists. Coffee house prophets announced a revelation. Concert managers bleated, scrapped and hawked his name in threatened lawsuits.

On the day of his debut the line coiled out of Carnegie Hall lobby into the sacred precincts of the Ethical Culture sign. All the violinists were there; Elman held a box and a field glass; Eddy Brown dozed; the elite of the music world whispered knowing confidences—and the boy played like a comet streaked with dazzling hues, and with a bravura that made the venerable critics vertiginous.

Accounts the next day vied with each other in superlatives. A new hero was raised on a rhetorical throne panoplied with comparisons with Paganini, Joachim, Wilhelmj, Sarasate. Every one was eclipsed; the other great virtuosi were expected to drone out a weary existence as back numbers. The work, the artistry, the splendid achievements of the matured masters were clean forgotten in the avidity with which a jaded public fed on the new sensation.

Max Rosen (arms folded); Jascha Heifetz (with camera); Leopold Auer (seated), his teacher and fellow pupils.

But violin history repeats itself with an almost mathematical exactitude. In the days of Paganini the newspapers delighted in playing him up against his rivals, and by sheer persistency in miracle mummery and humbug they invested him with mannerisms, charms, tricks, wonders which this genius never possessed. The false reputation brought him wealth, but also the contempt of those who believed these reports and thought him a charlatan. At that time the great Spohr wrote golden words: "It may with truth be said that it is unjust and one sided to exalt one style of playing at the expense of another, and that in art no one genius whatever can be permitted to enjoy a monopoly."

Heifetz is 18, modest, quiet, possessed of the salt of humor. On his trail is Max Rosen, another pupil of Auer, of about the same age, heralded in the same hysterical reports of critics and manager.

It is said that in order to invite comparison Rosen has trailed Heifetz through European cities, playing on the same stage before it had recovered from the Heifetz shock. Robert Schumann, in his "Zeitschrift," told a story of Ernst galloping after Paganini—was Nietzche right in his feeling of eternal recurrence?

Which one of these two boys is Paganini resurrected we do not know; but the present rivalry cannot have other than injurious effects on good taste. To hail a supreme genius is to checkmate future probabilities. Rosen will be heard in January. Heifetz has already appeared three times—once in recital and twice with orchestra.

He has an astonishing technique and a tone of an exotic coloring that suggests the enamelled prose of Walter Pater, but as vacuous and rarified. The breath of life is not in it, although upon it. In characterizing the tone production of other masters we have symbols from nature to draw upon—Zimbalist, a lovesick nightingale; Kreisler, a brook; Elman, the majestic, roaring sea; but of Heifetz the symbols must be drawn from the crafts shop and the jeweller's atelier.

On the human side these great virtuosi are much like other mortals, only that they work harder. The story of Heifetz lacks dramatic interest; not so with Rosen, whose career a Mary Antin could weep over in insipid prose.

Born on our great East Side, reared in poverty and obscurity, attending the Music School Settlement on Third street, he was finally brought to the attention of the MacDowell Club as the possessor of great talents. Through the generosity of the late Edward De Coppet, the musical Maecenas and founder of the Flonzaley Quartet, the boy was sent to Europe in 1913 to complete his studies.

We heard him in 1912 at Cooper Union and were not overdisturbed by his manifestations. Much may have developed in him since. Copenhagen, Bergen and Dresden papers write of him as our New York papers recently wrote of Heifetz. Mysterious letters are supposed to be in existence in which Auer is supposed to have extolled Rosen above his other pupils. Stories like this have been retailed before.

In the meantime the coming of Leopold Auer next month overshadows these ominous revelations of new geniuses. The venerable teacher will hold court, adored by his pupils and respected by the musical public. Until then much critical water will flow under the bridge.

ARISTOCRATS OF THE ICE

THE pursuit of happiness is a serious business with a good many people in New York, but probably no other class of metropolitan pleasure seekers take quite so much trouble over their recreation as do the devotees of the art or science—in fact with some it becomes almost the religion—of figure skating.

In fenced off areas or in a space in the centre reserved for that form of skating in the various city rinks they may be found daily and nightly conscientiously practising edges, whirls and figures. Totally ignoring the swarm of cheerful ordinary skaters, who joyously frolic, skid, slide and spin around corners in carefree abandon, the little clan of fancy skaters, with knit brows and sober countenances, go through their manœuvres.

Mastery of the technique of the skate is their object in life and source of happiness. A knee unbent at a moment when technique decrees that it should be bent is a cause of worry for an hour or more, and a botched figure will apparently fill the botcher with gloom for an entire day.

The masters of the art are instructors, usually from Europe, who have spent many years on the ice. It is probably their intense solemnity in instruction that has eliminated any possible joy from the process of learning to skate gracefully. Never do these pedagogues of the ice smile, rarely do they speak encouragingly to their gloomy pupils.

"If I was getting $9 an hour for doing that," said one ordinary skater with the ice of his last fall still clinging to him, as he paused without the charmed circle to watch a dark browed master mournfully cutting an edge—"if I was getting nine half men per sixty minutes for that I'd be laughing right out loud all the time."

But the breath of scandal does not pass by even these aristocrats of the ice.

"Look!" whispered one disciple of the curved skate to another as she pointed a horror struck finger at the prone figure of the skater. "Look! His right arm is out of place!"

"What's the difference? He's skating on his feet," objected the cheerful invader with the straight bladed skates.

But the indignant fancy skater glided figuratively and expressively away, and the plain skater, finding the temperature much warmer around the outside of the rink, skated cheerfully to the edge, where he joined his party in cutting up for all the world as if they were on a pond somewhere in the country far from artificial ice and even further from artificial skating.

WALTER DAMROSCH DISCUSSES THE EFFECT OF PRUSSIANISM ON MUSIC

THE SUNDAY SUN has invited representatives of the fine arts and of letters to discuss the effect of autocracy on the soul of the artist in Germany—to say what the Mailed Fist has done to the Muses. First to respond is Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony Society.

WITH few exceptions the artist swims abreast of the general current, the Zeitgeist or spirit of the times, in his own land especially. His works illustrate the ideals of the human society that has produced and molded him, its conceptions of the highest aspirations and ends in living.

So thinks Mr. Damrosch, who points out that these changes have coincided.

"Brahms," he said, "was the last of the great German composers who cherished the older, exalted musical ideals. To-day all the notable musicians, creative and interpretive, who shared in that spirit, are dead. The last to die, I should say, was Joachim, the great and noble violinist.

"Richard Strauss in his beginning sat at the feet of Brahms. He has ended by despising him. Of course, Strauss is a master. But Strauss and those of his movement, like Schoenberg, who have gone beyond him, have ceased to feel music as an interpreter of the beautiful and spiritual. They might be said to have made it an interpreter of material ugliness.

"I think it is beyond question that this change is an effect of the change in the German nation and the people.

"It is as if the present day German composers were blase, worn out, and their jaded souls in a kind of perversion had turned to violence and discord.

"As a conductor I am interested by the technical ingenuity of Strauss, the construction of his compositions—his orchestration, and so on. It affects me as people were affected by the jig saw puzzles that were so popular a few years ago. When we rehearse them I take a pleasure in watching the puzzle's fantastic parts properly fitted together. But that is about the summit of the pleasure they afford me. The performance is already an anti-climax."

Mr. Damrosch was asked if in touring with the Symphony orchestra season after season he had found any growth of a genuine enthusiasm for Strauss and the neo-Straussians.

"None whatever," he said positively. "Strauss can never take hold of a wide public. And that is not because people lacking a professional sophistication as to music have not yet heard his compositions played enough to grasp them. We may familiarize lovers of good music with them, but we cannot bring them honestly to enjoy them as they enjoy Beethoven symphonies."

"The instinct of the public is against them, and it is a right instinct."

Here Mr. Damrosch was reminded that when he and the orchestra play Strauss's "Don Quixote" or "Tod und Verklarung" of a Sunday afternoon they invariably hold a big audience attentive and responsive.

"But the audience you refer to is not typical," he said. "It is made up of people with a long cultivated critical interest, people capable of being enthralled intellectually by musical composition."

Asked whether musical interpretation in Germany has deteriorated in forty years of empire, Mr. Damrosch said that was a question on which he could not undertake to generalize.

"In Munich, for instance," he said, "I have attended what was heralded as a perfect performance of Wagner, at the larger opera house. No pains or expense had been spared, and the prices of tickets were correspondingly high. It was so bad that here in New York, where we do really have performances of Wagner not far short of perfection, we should have laughed at it. But in the same week, in the little opera house there, I heard Mozart done exquisitely.

"Bayreuth? Bayreuth has outlived its raison d'etre. It has served the purpose for which it became an institution. The Wagner operas are now given worthily all over the civilized world."

It was suggested that both Wagner and Brahms had lived and composed through the time of the German imperial confederation.

"But they were not affected," he replied, "because both were fully formed before it happened. As for Wagner, he did compose 'Parsifal' after it, but he had 'Parsifal' matured in his mind some time before he wrote it down."

Did Mr. Damrosch expect that when Germany was finally purged of autocracy and militarism the old ideals would return?

"That would be natural," he said. "And I am convinced that whether the cure is wrought through an overwhelming defeat of the German arms in the present war, or whether it is left to come about in some other way, the German people will not continue indefinitely in their obsession.

"We ought not to forget what a share of its richest treasures civilization owes to them. For the time they are in a bondage of mind and spirit; but it is not in their underlying nature as a race that they are the monstrous barbarians that some of us in our present indignation are prone to think them.

"The German empire is young. Its material successes have gone to its own head, as is the way with young nations. We ourselves in America have had some of it. You are not old enough to remember as I do the temper and the swagger of this country some decades ago.

"The bad state of things is the many results from a curious combination of social elements—the tyranny fostered by the imperial government of the aristocratic and military caste, the Junkers and the officers, with the great commercial class. By this the dominant forces within the nation were united for a scheme of conquest.

"That the ideal of conquest by force to be abandoned I am convinced for I am enough of a religionist in the real sense, to believe that what is wrong cannot endure; and that just as the Prodigal Son returned to his father's house, so will the German race return to the ideals of Goethe, Kant and Beethoven."